OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUES
Shot composition (lens coverage)

• A series of terms have evolved to describe how to effectively film/videorecord people.
• **Hint:** None of the lines go through joints!
Shot composition (lens coverage)

- **Detail shot** (extreme close-up): capture isolated detail
- **Face shot** (very close-up): mid-forehead to chin
- **Big close-up**: full head height
- **Close-up**: head and upper chest
- **Medium close-up**: head and lower chest
Shot composition (lens coverage)

- **Medium shot**: cuts just below the waist
- **Knee shot**: cuts just below the knew
- **Medium long**: full body with head room
- **Long shot**: person occupies $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{3}{4}$ screen height
- **Extreme long shot**: person occupies less than $\frac{1}{2}$ screen height
Shot composition (camera viewpoint)

• You can orient your subject in a variety of ways:
  – Frontal shot
  – Profile or side shot
  – Three-quarters frontal
  – back or rear shot

• You can change the height of the camera
  – low shot
  – level shot
  – high shot
  – overhead shot
Shot composition (camera viewpoint)

• Demonstration video 1: shots - implied proximity
• Demonstration video 2: basic camera shots
Filming a documentary: footage

• At the beginning of every shot, you should include metadata.
  – In professional settings a slate (clapperboard) is used to designate and mark particular scenes and takes during a production, and to sync audio with video.
  – For our purposes, it’s easier to write on white paper and clap with our hands.
  – **Write down**: Title of event, date, camera person, shot (scene) number
Filming a documentary: footage

• Capturing the event
  – Remember, you are goal is to capture the event (e.g. dance, storytelling session, interview, conversation)
    • Record the event in its entirety, to the best of your abilities.
    • Record the event using the best viewing angle
Filming a documentary: footage

- Every film needs to be structured in order to help orient the viewers.
- Before any scene with primary subjects or main events, there are scenes to establish information.
- An establishing shot sets up the context for a scene
  - To establish settings: generally a long shot is used to indicate where and when the event takes place.
  - To preface an event: a narrator or on-screen person informs the viewer about the event which they are about to see.
Filming a documentary: footage

• **Additional materials**
  – **Interview participants** about the event, before and after. This helps with contextualization.
  – **Gather B-roll (cutaway)** shots, before and after the event. These are filler shots use to help contextualize dialog and to cover edits.

• **Demonstration video 3:** [filming a micro-documentary](#)